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Vera B. Smith
Iowa State College

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The Transformation of Our Back Yard

By VERA B. SMITH

It was truly a case of the old saying "Necessity is the Mother of Invention," for we did not know when we moved into our house and looked out upon the miserable, forlorn patch of yellow clay which composed our back yard, that it could be evolved into a truly lovely garden spot. My father was the first one of us to see the possibilities of that ugly strip of hard-packed, weed-fringed earth. It really seemed an impossible task because of the unsightliness of the bare earth, the rubbish and tin cans.

It started one day while I was washing dishes when looking out of the kitchen window I saw father coming out of the barn with a rake and spade in his hands and the light of a conqueror in his eyes. He set to work in an easy, methodical way, carrying boards, iron, wire, cans and other loose odds and ends and piling them into two stacks on the rear of the lot. He burned all he could of the things he could not use and buried the rest. The usable things he stored in the barn, which was both work-shop and garage. With the debris cleared away he began the task of raking, leveling off the bumps and filling in the hollows.

With the yard cleaned, the next task was the planning. The space to be gardened measured about 65x50 feet. Father divided it into thirds. The two thirds nearest the house he seeded to blue grass and clover. The third near the barn he packed down hard and covered with cinders. A good spring rain gave our grass a good start, and the cinders around the barn made an excellent driveway.

To keep down expense father carried home bundles of laths which he used for fences and trellises. First he made a low lattice fence to separate the cinders from the grassy lawn, and at either end placed a hollow tile which served both as gate post and flower urn. He then painted the fence and urn a dull green. With the remainder of the laths he made trellises for the kitchen window, for an out-building, and for the back porch. Truly the back porch was a master piece. It faced the street and so needed some clever transformation. Around the edge of the porch he laid red bricks for the distance of three feet. Five feet from this he built an L-shaped trellis which made a cozy corner and hide the porch from the public eye. The finishing touch to the permanent fixture for the yard was the building of two bird baths. These were made by cutting square holes in the yard and lining them with cement. The yard was now ready for color introduced by blossoming flowers.

There was a vacant lot next to our lot so father mowed the edge of this and planted a double row of red, pink and white cosmos to form a border. Along the barn and along the alley he planted hollyhocks and along the cinder path castor beans formed the border. As summer advanced the trellises were covered with maderia vines and cyprus. The green lattice fence became the support for sweet peas which bloomed in profusion. In the kitchen nook father carefully planted pansies, marigolds, verbenas, zinnias and narcissuses with utmost precaution as to the size and color of the flowers. This nook, tho simple in content, formed a lovely sight for the eye and was a source of cut flowers for the entire summer.

The ugly patch of yellow clay that met our eyes when we first moved into

the house had been transformed into a garden spot of no little beauty, but father was not entirely satisfied for he saw the possibility of making the yard useful as well as attractive. He enlisted the services of my brother and built a garage for my brother's car and a run-way to use while working on the car. Our entire family have had no end of pleasure out of our yard and it has been an incentive for many of our neighbors and friends to cause transformations to their own yards. It is possible to do it with very little money and the results are well worth the effort.

BETTER HOME PROJECT

(Continued from Page 5)

the necessities of household furnishings, to the visitors who may come to see the possibilities of a small house simply and economically furnished, and to the students who may be planning homes either as class work or for themselves. It is a worthwhile problem, and one which will mean much for America's better American home.

Stuffed Baked Pork Chops

Can you give me a recipe for stuffed baked pork chops and cabbage relish?

Stuffed Baked Pork Chops

Have pork chops cut thick, wipe carefully, and slit side of each chop, making a pocket. Fill this opening with a dressing (your favorite kind if you prefer) made of 1 cup of soft crumbs, two or three sage leaves, a little onion, one-fourth teaspoon each of salt and pepper, one-fourth cup of melted butter or bacon fat, if you prefer. Bake until thoroughly browned, basting while cooking.

Cabbage Relish

Select a heavy cabbage, take off outside leaves and shred finely. Combine with a cream salad dressing—one-fourth tablespoon salt, one-half tablespoon mustard, two tablespoons sugar, 1 egg slightly beaten, 3 tablespoons butter, three-fourths cup cream, one-third cup vinegar. Cook over hot water until thick. If you wish to make this salad more attractive, sliced celery and pimientos may be added. Peanuts give a good flavor.

CHILD LABOR

By W. A. B., in the International Book-binder.

Down in the depths of the factory's gloom
They gather at early dawn,
Where the ceaseless whirl of spindle and loom

Goes on and on and on.
And the god of gold in the tainted air,
An invisible Moloch stands,
As he watches the fabrics woven there
By the toil of childish hands.

Backward and forward, over and up,
Steadily still they go,
But they hold to the lips a bitter cup,
Whose dregs are the dregs of woe;
For the hopes of youth grow faint and die
Held fast in those iron hands,
And the cold, hard world has never a sigh
For the patient, childish hands.

Ah, ye, whose darlings, in flowery ways,

Know naught of grim despair,
Think of the heated summer days,
And your children working there,
When never a cooling zephyr comes
Through the factory's stifling breath,
Where the looms weave on and the
spindle hums
In the treadmill 'round to death.

And onward, onward, upward and back,
In the close and crowded rooms,
In a dizzy race on an endless track,
Go spindles and shafts and looms;
Till the angel of death with fateful glass,
Shakes out the dusky sands,
As the merciful, longed-for shadows pass
Over worn-out childish hands.

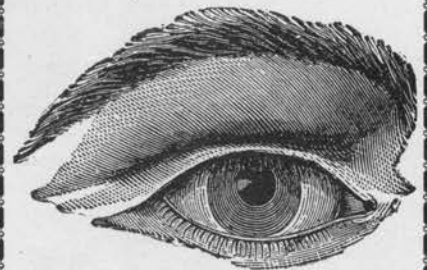
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